AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.-18. (CANCELLED)

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for facilitating play of a simulated scratch-off lottery ticket on an electronic device, comprising:

generating a pattern of nodes in a play area of the simulated scratch-off lottery ticket,

the pattern of nodes forming a plurality of available paths from the first section of the play area to a second section of the play area,

at least one of the nodes ~~having~~ including at least one symbol within a perimeter of the node

wherein at least two nodes in the pattern that are adjacent to one another do not together form a portion of an available path, and

further wherein any one of the nodes is selectable at the start of a game of the simulated scratch-off lottery ticket;

causing the at least one symbol within a perimeter of a node to be concealed from view until a signal indicating a selection of the node by a player is determined;

receiving an indication that a player has completed a game comprising the generated pattern of nodes;

determining whether the player is eligible for a prize based on a result of the game; and

outputting an indication of whether the player is eligible for a prize.

20. (ORIGINAL)   The method of claim 19, wherein the pattern of nodes further comprises links between the nodes, each link indicating a connection of one node to another node in one of the available paths and wherein at least two nodes that are adjacent to one another in the pattern are not connected by a link.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)   The method of claim 20, <u>further comprising</u> making the generated pattern available for download to an electronic device.

22. (CANCELLED)

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)   The method of claim 19, wherein determining whether the player is eligible for a prize comprises:

determining whether the player has selected a set of nodes in the pattern that ~~form~~ forms a path from the first section of the play area to the second section of the play area, thereby determining whether the player has revealed a path that potentially qualifies for a prize;

if the player has selected a path that potentially qualifies for a prize, determining whether the path includes less than a predetermined number of nodes; and

causing a prize to be provided to the player if the path includes less than the predetermined number of nodes.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 19, further comprising:

determining an efficiency of play of the player by

determining a number of a predetermined symbol included in the path selected by the player,

determining a number of nodes included in the path, and

dividing the number of the predetermined symbol by the number of nodes.

25. (ORIGINAL)   The method of claim 24, further comprising:

causing a first prize to be provided to the player if the efficiency of play is a first efficiency and causing a second prize to be provided to the player if the efficiency of play is a second efficiency, wherein the first efficiency is greater than the second efficiency.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method for facilitating play of a simulated scratch-off lottery ticket on an electronic device, comprising:

reading data that defines a pattern of nodes spanning a play area of the simulated scratch-off lottery ticket, the pattern defining a plurality of paths between a first section of the play area and a second section of the play area,

wherein each path of the plurality of paths is defined by links between adjacent nodes,

wherein at least two of the nodes that are adjacent to one another do not include a link between them,

wherein any one of the nodes is selectable at the start of a game of the simulated scratch-off lottery ticket, and

wherein at least one of the nodes is associated with at least one symbol, the at least one symbol not being made visible from a predetermined viewing perspective until a signal indicating selection of the node associated with the symbol is received;

outputting the data on a display,

wherein the links defining the paths are visible from the predetermined viewing perspective from the time the data is initially output;

determining that an attempt to win a prize associated with the data has ended;

determining whether the attempt has been successful; and

outputting an indication of whether the attempt has been successful.

27. (ORIGINAL)   The method of claim 26, further comprising:

receiving a signal indicating a selection of a node; and

causing the at least one symbol associated with the node to be made visible from the predetermined viewing perspective.

28.   (CANCELLED)

29. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 26, wherein determining whether the attempt has been successful comprises:

determining whether a set of nodes forming a path from the first section of the play area to the second section of the play area has been selected.

30. (ORIGINAL)   The method of claim 29, wherein determining whether the attempt has been successful further comprises:

determining whether the set of nodes forming a path comprises less than a predetermined number of nodes.

31. (ORIGINAL)   The method of claim 29, wherein determining whether the attempt has been successful further comprises:

determining whether the set of nodes forming the path includes at least a predetermined number of a predetermined symbol.

32. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A computer readable medium encoded with instructions for directing a processor to:

read data that defines a pattern of nodes spanning a play area of the simulated scratch-off lottery ticket, the pattern defining a plurality of paths between a first section of the play area and a second section of the play area,

wherein each path of the plurality of paths is defined by links between adjacent nodes,

wherein at least two of the nodes that are adjacent to one another do not include a link between them,

wherein any one of the nodes is selectable at the start of a game of the simulated scratch-off lottery ticket, and

wherein at least one of the nodes is associated with at least one symbol, the at least one symbol not being made visible from a predetermined viewing perspective until a signal indicating selection of the node associated with the symbol is received;

output the data on a display,

wherein the links defining the paths are visible from the predetermined viewing perspective from the time the data is initially output;

determine that an attempt to win a prize associated with the data has ended;

determine whether the attempt has been successful; and

output an indication of whether the attempt has been successful.

33. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An apparatus for creating a scratch-off lottery ticket, comprising:

a processor, and

a storage device that stores a program for directing the processor;

the processor being operative with the program to:

read data that defines a pattern of nodes spanning a play area of the simulated scratch-off lottery ticket, the pattern defining a plurality of paths between a first section of the play area and a second section of the play area,

wherein each path of the plurality of paths is defined by links between adjacent nodes,

wherein at least two of the nodes that are adjacent to one another do not include a link between them,

wherein any one of the nodes is selectable at the start of a game of the simulated scratch-off lottery ticket, and

wherein at least one of the nodes is associated with at least one symbol, the at least one symbol not being made visible from a predetermined viewing perspective until a signal indicating selection of the node associated with the symbol is received;

output the data on a display,

wherein the links defining the paths are visible from the predetermined viewing perspective from the time the data is initially output;

determine that an attempt to win a prize associated with the data has ended;

determine whether the attempt has been successful; and

output an indication of whether the attempt has been successful.

34. (CANCELLED)

35. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method for providing a scratch-off lottery game, the method comprising:

displaying a plurality of game elements in a play area of a lottery game,

each of the game elements being displayed adjacent to at least one other game element,

wherein each game element includes at least one indication of a link to an adjacent game element,

wherein each game element includes an indication of a respective value associated with the game element, and

wherein in accordance with a game rule associated with the lottery game any one of the plurality of game elements printed in the play area of the lottery game is selectable as an initial player selection; and

displaying a total game element including an indication of a predetermined total value,

wherein at least one set of two or more game elements forms a first potentially continuous path and a second potentially continuous path, such that the sum of the respective values of the two or more game elements of the first potentially continuous path is greater than the predetermined total value and the first potentially continuous path is associated with a prize, and

wherein the second potentially continuous path is not associated with a prize.

36. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 35, wherein the sum of the respective values of the two or more game elements of the first potentially continuous path is greater than the predetermined total value and is not greater than a predetermined maximum value.

37. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 36, in which the predetermined maximum value is twenty-one.

38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 35, wherein the sum of the respective values of the two or more game elements of the second potentially continuous path is greater than a predetermined maximum value.

39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)   The method of claim 38, in which the predetermined maximum value is twenty-one.

40. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 35, wherein the sum of the respective values of the two or more game elements of the second potentially continuous path is not greater than the predetermined total value.

41. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 35, wherein the at least one set of two or more game elements that forms a potentially continuous path includes a number of game elements not greater than a predetermined maximum number.

42. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)   The method of claim 41, in which the predetermined maximum number is five.

43. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)   The method of claim 35, further comprising:
obscuring all of the game elements;
allowing a player to reveal first any of the game elements;
receiving a first selection by a player of a first game element that indicates a link to a second game element;
revealing the first game element to the player;
receiving a second selection by a player of the second game element that indicates a link to a third game element;
revealing the second game element to the player;
determining, based on the first game element, the second game element, and the predetermined total value, whether the player has won a prize; and
indicating to the player whether the player has won a prize.